Attention: Jose Ramos-Horta, c/o CDPM-CIDAC
London 25-05-1992

Dear Jose,
I heard from Luisa that you'll be in CIDAC today, an opportunity to fax you this letter.
I missed the opportunity of having a proper chat after the Brussels hearing, so I'll have to do it this way. It's about your Peace Plan, launched in Brussels and later on explained in much more detail in New York. A few basic questions I need to ask you:

1/ I'm still a bit confused about the whole ideas of Peace Plans. Initially I thought that talks without preconditions imply no peace plans (unless, of course, it is for the purpose for your movement as a hidden agenda). I remember when Abilio's Peace Plan was launched, the gut reaction of many (including me), this is not anymore talks without preconditions. I see quite clearly the difference between your Peace Plan and Abilio's but is still doesn't answer the basic point of entering negotiations with the Indonesians with a comprehensive plan.

2/ The term 'autonomy' which emerges in your New York presentation and the BBC interview you gave has created quite some confusion. I'm getting reactions from my Indonesian friends being puzzled after hearing the BBC report. Of course I realise that the second phase (autonomy) is not the end phase but the term autonomy has absolutely a different meaning in Indonesia. In the unitarian structure of Indonesia, autonomy is just an empty phrase. The two regions, Aceh and Yogya are so called autonomous regions, which in practice is similar to the position of Tibet with regard to Peking. Unless you mean something very specific and have special political aims, I prefer you avoid using the term. The Reuter report from New York quotes you as saying that ET would be granted 'limited autonomy within the Indonesian federation'. There is no such thing as an Indonesian federation. So, did Reuter misquote you, as they did on Xanana's 'secret plan'?

3/ Another complication with your second phase. Does it mean in practice, while accepting Indonesia's temporary rule over East Timor, we all have to stop demanding all the things we have been demanding all those years? Please help me with this.

4/ Regarding the strategy. I've noticed that Australians groups have greeted your plan in the most enthusiastic way. Understandable if you have to face guys like Keating and Evans, at least it gives a new political opening for the East Timorese and the solidarity groups. I think it is less the case for Europe and the American continent. Tony Hall's bill is explicitly demanding right of self-determination now, a political gain in comparison with a few years back. In Europe we are trying to apply the 'encirclement strategy', meaning focussing on 'lesser' countries like Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Ireland, Austria etc as leverage for more important countries like the UK etc. Personally I think, using your position of temporary rule, is quite defensive, a few steps back. I much more prefer to lobby with the old line of selfdetermination and talks without preconditions.

5/ Why have you made no mention at all of Portugal's role as the Administering Power? This seems to lift the whole idea out of the UN framework and resolutions on which everything has until now been based.

6/ Last but not least, I realise you hardly have time to brief us periodically. But do realise that your new moves have created quite a stir among the ranks of the solidarity groups. I'm getting a bit worried so please fill me in, in particular the background why you decided to launch this plan? Is it true that this plan goes back as early as 1990?

with affection, liem and carmel